

**Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE) Program**  
**Cross-Agency Program**

EPA Office of Pollution Prevention and Toxic Substances

**Geographic location or area of activity:** National Program 48 sponsoring local projects that include urban, rural, tribal and other communities

**Description of activity:** EPA's Community Action for a Renewed Environment (CARE) program has created a new model for bringing together EPA, state and local governments, community-based organizations and industry to assist in environmental collaborative problem-solving and action at the local level to improve environment health. Under CARE, EPA issues grants to local communities to take a broad look at their environmental risk, build a consensus on priorities, and mobilize the community and its partners to take action. With CARE, EPA is a partner, a facilitator and a resource to help communities become the stewards of their local environment.

Over the past three years, CARE grants to reduce toxics in the environment have reached 48 communities in 24 states, in rural and urban areas, with a sum total of \$6.5 million. As of the summer of 2007, CARE projects have garnered support from over 850 partners, including community groups, local, state, and tribal governments, businesses, and universities and leveraged EPA funds for at least \$1.4 million more since 2005 to assist communities form broad-based partnerships to improve their local environment

By bringing together the information, knowledge and resources from the local, state and federal level organizations and agencies, CARE makes it possible for communities to solve problems that have not been addressed by national regulation. This collaborative problem-solving approach is knocking down the institutional stovepipes that exist with Agencies and between environmental media (air, water, waste) and putting in place a sustainable method for addressing community environmental public health concerns.

Last July, EPA Administrator Steve Johnson and CDC Director Julie Gerberding signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) to improve federal collaboration in support of and in building capacity in communities to address environmental health. The MOU capitalizes on the unique strengths of these agencies – EPA has expertise in identifying and managing environmental exposures; CDC has expertise in developing health assessments, monitoring exposure, and health education – and both EPA and CDC currently manage a number of community-based programs and have numerous tools and programs to assist communities. Under the MOU, collaboration will be modeled in four CARE pilot communities and an integrated set of expertise and tools geared to communities seeking to solve their environmental problems and improve environmental health will be made available.



CDC Director Julie Gerberding and EPA Administrator Steve Johnson signing the MOU

**Interagency partners:** Center for Disease Control, Department of Interior, and multiple States and Tribes.

**Local partners:** Over 900 partners including state and local governments, civic and environmental groups, and industry.

**Activity URL:** <http://www.epa.gov/care/>